



# Tomb Raider

## The Last Revelation

The fourth Lara Croft adventure offers a wide range of new technological developments, **PATRICK BARHAM** discovers. The heroine is more defined than ever before...

Ancient Egyptian legend tells how the evil god Set was outwitted and imprisoned in a secret tomb and warns that one day he will return to seek vengeance. While exploring in Egypt, Lara Croft discovers the lost tomb and unwittingly unleashes its ancient evil. In a race against time, Lara must use all her wit and skill to re-imprison Set and save the world. It's a tricky one to say the least.

Set entirely in Egyptian locations, Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation features traps and puzzles, twists and turns, and non-stop action. The game has been developed to appeal to existing Tomb Raider fans and brand new players alike. The storyline is integral to the game, unfolding at certain intervals to give the player a real sense of being involved in an epic, cinematic-style adventure.

Full motion video sequences (FMV) during the earlier stages of the game detail Lara's discovery of the tomb and removal of its ancient seal. Subsequent FMV sequences and in-game animations are used to develop the plot further, introduce new characters and reveal to the player exactly how Lara must achieve her ultimate objective.

In order to familiarise the player with Lara's many moves, a training level must be completed before access is granted to the real adventure. This training level is a flashback featuring a 16-year-old Lara and her mentor, Von Croy on an expedition in Cambodia.

Last Revelation's locations feature settings such as Cairo's Citadel and bazaars, the Pyramids and Sphinx complex of Giza, the city of Alexandria, Cleopatra's Lost Palaces, Karnak and the Valley of the Kings. Each location is split into several areas that must be fully explored in order for Lara to progress to her next objective.

There is also a re-designed inventory system that allows the player to collect and examine items. Adding further depth to the puzzle element, items may also be combined to create new weapons and tools. Different types of ammunition may also be combined with a variety of weapons to deal with specific situations more effectively. Lara's inventory, besides standard items such as pistols, canteen, flares and compass, now also features a flashlight and binoculars with zoom in/out feature. Lara will also be able to add further items and weapons to her inventory, such as a sniper laser-sight, a crossbow, grenades, puzzle items and maps.

As well as new puzzles and traps, Last Revelation features an array of new moves for Lara, including rope swings, fireman slides and many different types of switch mechanisms – all of which require different animations from Lara to operate them. Players will not need to wander around vast maps in search of clues or objects: puzzles will be solved with information or items from the near vicinity in order to keep objectives focused. Several items may be required to solve a puzzle; they may also have to be combined before the puzzle is solved.

No Tomb Raider adventure would be complete without enemies. The Last Revelation bad guys include mummies, skeletons, wraiths, sphinxes, statues (ancient Gods/creatures), Von Croy's human followers, giant scorpions and legions of scarab beetles.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been taken to a new level throughout the game and now offers new and unexpected challenges to the player. It also contributes to differences in the puzzle elements of the game. Enemies have a far wider range of moves, reacting with stealth, cunning and intelligence. Some enemies even possess the same moves as Lara herself.

The game engine for Last Revelation has had a 90% redesign offering many improvements and new elements. Visually, the locations are more detailed than ever before. The levels look more realistic, featuring 3D architecture and objects. Lara is able to interact much more with the environments and also with objects – collapsible walls, targetable scenery and breakable objects.

The introduction of an advanced lighting system, including new spotlighting, results in a highly dramatic atmosphere – this is particularly apparent in the PC version. Core Design has made specific use of the power of the PC in areas that it excels over the PlayStation. This is in fact the first time that Core has presented a specific PC version of the game that will utilise the PC hardware to its full potential.

Other features include a camera system with a new 'roaming' element, giving a more dynamic and cinematic experience. A realistic sky also moves in the outside sections, adding even greater atmosphere, and a wealth of special effects are included for additional dramatic effect.

And finally, what of the starring lady herself? In keeping with Last Revelation's new level of detail all round, Lara Croft is more defined than ever before due to new 'skinning' techniques. Her appearance is vastly more detailed, her moves more fluid and her appeal stronger than ever. ✕